Information Technology Specialist (Customer Support)
GS-2210- 9/11/12

Introductory Statement: This position is located in the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, Information Technology Staff, (OB) Operations Branch. The OB is responsible for the delivery of customer support services, customer assistance, and/or training in response to customer requirements. Also, the OB is responsible for troubleshooting "IT HELP DESK" calls relating to software and hardware issues, program applications and support for the network and email, NFC/NITC Administrative systems, and managing IT budgets and purchases.

The incumbent of this position serves as an IT Specialist for one of several service area locations within GIPSA. The incumbent is responsible for ensuring that information technology products and services required to support the program are planned, budgeted, procured, managed, installed, and maintained in the local service area and for keeping the GIPSA Supervisory IT Specialist and program managers apprised of new developments, customer service (CS) requirements, advancing technologies, and implementation strategies that impact GIPSA nationwide. The service areas are generally multi-state areas.

The following responsibilities are for the full-performance level. At developmental grade levels, assignments will be of more limited scope, performed with less independence, and may reflect limited complexity and personal contacts. At developmental levels, incumbent will be acquiring background necessary to function at the full performance level.

Customer Support and Configuration Management 50%

Analyzes and resolves the most difficult customer support requests involving integration or configuration related issues. Supports systems involving a wide variety of different platforms, operating systems, applications, and desktop configurations. Identifies and breaks down problems using structured problem resolution approaches. Works with network specialists, applications developers, and security specialists to prevent recurring problems.

Responsible for research and analysis on new PC/workstation equipment, software, and/or communications to ensure network compatibility. Performs planning, design and integration of system views as they relate to compatibility.

Evaluates specifications and features of new products, performing product comparisons, feasibility and cost benefit analyses, and performance and compatibility testing. Makes recommendations for future implementation to management.

Serves as a technical specialist in capacity management and performance management. Identifies performance deviations from service level objectives. Evaluates configurations and operations to determine causes, and recommends management actions to restore quality services. Collects, evaluates and summarizes capacity, performance, problem, resource, and workload data to recommend configuration changes to maximize the effective and efficient use of installed technology. Performs configuration, statistical and utilization analyses and studies associated with capacity and performance management.

Equipment Analysis 25%

Plans and develops requirements and specifications for new or upgraded computer hardware or peripheral equipment to meet business requirements involving complex or intricate issues or problems.

Analyzes equipment needs for an integrated information system. Identifies the need for new and replacement equipment. Evaluates automation requirements including the performance of such duties as requirements analysis, feasibility studies, cost-benefit analysis, or analysis of alternatives.

Makes recommendations to management based on the results of these studies and on technological requirements. Reviews requirements proposals and evaluates existing workflows to analyze the best use of resources for a given desired outcome.

IT Project Planning and Management 10%

Performs a variety of duties related to IT projects involving program-related issues that contain complicating elements. Manages special crosscutting initiatives and task force groups to accomplish programmatic goals. These groups may review specific programs at the organization level or develop new initiatives in various program areas.

Communicates and/or visits with clients regularly to provide support and ensure delivery of quality products and services. Assists clients in understanding their roles and responsibilities in the business relationship with IT Solutions. Assists clients with development of bills of material and statements of work. Supports clients with technical expertise in support of their IT acquisitions, including security and privacy requirements. Provides advice on the appropriate IT products and services, contract vehicles, and financial process to satisfy client requirements. Provides advice and assistance to clients in developing and preparing acquisition strategies for managing complex tasks from inception to award and closure. Decisions as to what must be done are complicated by numerous kinds of applications, situations, and options presented by the various Industry Partners. Decisions and determinations are made in the absence of formal written policy and/or without formal approval. Coordinates and conducts liaison between client agency and Industry Partner, ensuring proper staffing of tasks and projects. Reviews and evaluates Industry Partner's performance and ensures compliance with contract terms. Coordinates resolution of IT technical, management, and contract administration task order closeouts and funding issues. Assists client agency and Industry Partners with other administrative and technical issues as required.

Administration of Information Technology Systems 5%

Analyzes systems performance of new and existing equipment to improve system and network configurations. Diagnoses and solves complex systems problems. Analyzes the pros and cons of various solutions to minimize down time and provide a stable, consistent system environment.

Plans and analyzes system configuration and the need for changes to support the organization's program of work. Develops alternatives for presentation to management. Performs feasibility studies and cost benefit analysis to support alternatives.

Factor 1-7 Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of, and skill in applying, most of the following: IT concepts, principles, methods, and practices; the mission and programs of customer organizations; the organization's IT infrastructure; performance management/measurement methods, tools, and techniques; systems testing and evaluation principles, methods, and tools; IT security principles and methods; requirement analysis principles and methods; COTS products and components; Internet technologies to analyze the Internet potential of systems, networks, and data; new and emerging information technologies and/or industry trends; acquisition management policies and procedures; cost-benefit analysis principles and methods; analytical methods and practices; project management principles and methods; and oral and written communication techniques.

Plans and carries out difficult and complex assignments and develops new methods, approaches, and procedures, and provides advice and guidance on a wide range and variety of IT issues. Interprets IT policies, standards, and guidelines. Conducts analyses and recommends resolutions of complex issues affecting the specialty area.

Factor 2-4 Supervisory Controls

The supervisor outlines overall objectives and available resources. The employee and supervisor, in consultation, discuss timeframes, scope of the assignment including possible stages, and possible approaches. The employee determines the most appropriate principles, practices, and methods to apply in all phases of assignments, including the approach to be taken, degree of intensity, and depth of research in management advisories; frequently interprets regulations on his/her own initiative, applies new methods to resolve complex and/or intricate, controversial, or unprecedented issues and problems, and resolves most of the conflicts that arise; and keeps the supervisor informed of progress and of potentially controversial matters. The supervisor reviews completed work for soundness of overall approach, effectiveness in meeting requirements or producing expected results, the feasibility of recommendations, and adherence to requirements. The supervisor does not usually review methods used.

Factor 3-4 Guidelines

The employee uses guidelines and precedents that are very general regarding agency policy statements and objectives. Guidelines specific to assignments are often scarce, inapplicable or have gaps in specificity that require considerable interpretation and/or adaptation for application to issues and problems. The employee uses judgment, initiative, and resourcefulness in deviating from established methods to modify, adapt, and/or refine broader guidelines to resolve specific complex and/or intricate issues and problems; treat specific issues or problems; research trends and patterns; develop new methods and criteria; and/or propose new policies and practices.

Work consists of a variety of duties that involve many different and unrelated processes and methods pertinent to the IT field. The employee decides what needs to be done by evaluating unusual circumstances; considering different approaches; and dealing with incomplete and conflicting data. The employee uses judgment and originality by interpreting data; planning the work; and refining the methods and techniques being used.

Factor 5-4 Scope and Effect

Work involves managing IT projects for major office or program issues of broad impact. Conceives of and implements new initiatives and projects to strengthen, facilitate, and integrate IT programs. Undertakes or participates in special projects, ongoing analyses, investigations and initiatives that have high priority for high-level management, such as, producing complex written reports; organizing special committees, workshops, or other gatherings; initiating program reviews; developing or fostering cross-agency activities.

Factor 6-3 Personal Contacts

Contacts are with individuals or groups from outside the agency, including consultants, contractors, vendors, or representatives of professional associations, the media, or public interest groups, in moderately unstructured settings. Contacts are related to technological information and developments applicable to assigned IT projects. Contacts may also include agency officials who are several managerial levels removed from the employee when such contacts occur on an ad hoc basis. Must recognize or learn the role and authority of each party during the course of the meeting.

Factor 7-3 Purpose of Contacts

The purpose of contacts is to influence and persuade employees and managers to accept and implement findings, advice, guidance, and recommendations in the technology specialty area(s) of the position. May encounter resistance as a result of issues such as organizational conflict, competing objectives, or resource problems. Must be skillful in approaching contacts to obtain the desired effect; e.g., gaining compliance with established policies and regulations by persuasion or negotiation.

Factor 8-1 Physical Demands

The work is sedentary. Some work may require walking and standing in conjunction with travel to and attendance at meetings and conferences away from the work site. Some employees may carry light items such as papers, books, or small parts, or drive a motor vehicle. The work does not require any special physical effort.

Factor 9-1 Work Environment

The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated. The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts that require normal safety precautions. Some employees may occasionally be exposed to uncomfortable conditions in such places as research and production facilities.

OTHER: *Serves as a Security Representative Point of Contact (POC) for GIPSA. Duties include: insuring compliance with established GIPSA security policies; responding to requests for information; responding to and reporting security threats; and informing the Information Security Program Manager (ISSPM) of any deficiencies at their location. Also maintains security awareness and procedures at their location by acting as the POC for all security concerns and disseminates information as appropriate.*